THE NEW REPUBLIC

Castro and Khrushchev

Ernst Halperin

The Flaw in John O'Hara

Irving Howe

How We Pay Our Bills

Edwin L. Dale, Jr.

Ben Shahn on Fallout

Frank Getlein

November 27, 196

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

Clearing the Air

★ Every Administration comes to Washington with the notion that by charm or guile it is going to get a lot of people to do a lot of things they don't like. Then after about a year in office the Administration discovers this won't work. We have seen it happen again and again. There comes a fateful time of decision, and we think Kennedy has just about reached it now. The Administration must decide on its identity.

Poor old Hoover came to office and in no time found himself facing the wretched Smoot-Hawley tariff. He signed it, and that was that. He had a chance to fight, and didn't . . . FDR came to office, dragged the banks and business up from the gutter – which then slapped him in the face. He might have wilted but didn't. He fought; and got re-elected three times.

Now decision-time has just about come for Kennedy, too. Personally we are delighted at last week's four-day trip to the West Coast, following his pre-election visits to New York and New Jersey. He got out of Washington, stopped reading columnists, and saw where his strength lies. It's the people. There's a whole lot of nonsense being talked these days about the Administration being "anti-business." Some of the nicest people we know are in the Administration and they are going around with a baffled hurt look, like a collie, as the saying goes, that has been struck by Albert Payson Terhune. They can't understand it. All they are doing is enforcing the anti-trust laws! Bobby Kennedy went to New York to explain he's not anti-business at all.

What good does that kind of thing do? Any administration that is worth its salt is put down automatically by NAM and the US Chamber of Commerce as "anti-business" and the Kennedy crowd might as well discover it. They are going to be called "soft on Communism," too, by the radical right. What we liked about the Kennedy speeches in California was his brisk, frontal reply to the Birchites and Sentinels; it cleared the air. And we have another tip for the Administration: when the chips are down, there are more votes in the US from being called "anti-business" than "pro-business."

Our information is that Kennedy is going to come out fighting in the new session for federal aid to education, for health aid to the aged, and for power to make tariff cuts across-the-board rather than item-by-item. History will give Kennedy good marks if he does so. The only way to win these battles is by all out, frontal assaults. On tariffs, for example, the sum total of the lobbies backing individual increases is staggering; the one hope of defeating them is to make the country understand that the national good is different from the aggregate of a lot of private goods.

Silent Tabus

★ Half a dozen of us at lunch at the Press Club last week were talking about Drew Pearson's recent columns on the Catholic Hierarchy. "Let's face it," one reporter said finally, "not one of us here would have the nerve to write what Pearson does, or hope to get it printed!" Nobody denied it. Pearson has been saying, simply enough, that the Cardinals' veto killed Federal aid to education last session, and that the Church suffered "a major defeat" in public opinion by resisting any school aid unless parochial schools were included too.

What always impresses one are the silent tabus in the American press. Parochial aid, birth control. Nobody wants to get mixed up in a religious fight. For reasons that would take too long to analyze Drew Pearson is an exception and his courage in entering such controversies compensates for certain other faults. It would be interesting for some school of journalism to find how many timid newspapers cancelled out his columns last week.

Birth control is a "hot" subject. We listened to a first rate special report by Eric Sevareid on CBS recently on Brazil's horrifying problems. Not a word on b---- c------. Incidentally, officials of the Connecticut Planned Parenthood League face trial this week for operating their clinic in what may be a decisive legal battle.

A Willkie Type

★ We would guess the Republicans would nominate a dark horse in 1964. Present candidates – Nixon, Goldwater, Rockefeller – all begin to look shopworn. Would a Rockefeller divorce injure the governor? Yes, we think, it would. Birchites threaten Republicans, too; not by electing anybody, but by sluicing off campaign funds from the fat crazy-cat contributors who normally finance the party. We foresee the GOP searching out a Wendell Willkie business type in '64, or a Calvin Coolidge state governor-type who gets last-minute attention by breaking some Massachusetts police strike. We might add we think President Kennedy will be hard to beat.

As Gerald Johnson wrote last week Junius Scales is in jail for six years though he conspicuously broke with the Communist Party two years before his trial. His sentence cannot be reduced because he won't name others. On the other hand, under the same Smith Act, the government has just dropped its case against Claude Lightfoot, notorious Illinois Communist, because of the standards established by a recent Supreme Court decision. There seems to be some fate that makes action in this field ridiculous.

Now the government is doing its best to make martyrs of the Communist Party leadership with fantastic failure-to-register penalties of $10,000 fine and 5 years imprisonment *for each day* of non-compliance. Theoretically the whole remaining 10,000 CP membership must either register or be jailed. Will the US set up a central prison for political offenders?

Notes

★ On Nehru's trip here he said official Red Chinese maps not only show parts of India as belonging to Peking but also territory claimed by Russia. . . . The American Medical Association outspent all other lobbies here in the first half of 1961 – $146,894.

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That Balanced Budget

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This is the season when lights burn late at the White House and the Bureau of the Budget as the Presidential messages describing the state of the union, the economy and the budget are readied for Congress in January. The tests of strength within an Administration which determine the final form of these messages make December one of the most decisive months of any political year, for the President must live through the next session of Congress with the commitments he makes now. What economic line will the President take? Repeated assurances of a "balanced budget," and Presidential instructions given to the Cabinet on October 26 about putting all departments on a low-fat diet, suggest that Mr. Kennedy is tending to follow the economic conservatism of his Treasury Department rather than the more professional analysis of his brilliant Council of Economic Advisers, headed by Walter Heller.

The notion of a "balanced budget" is a fetish before which the well-creased and custom-made trousers of the country always genuflect. It is so sacrosanct that to pick it up and examine it closely is punishable as impiety. Yet it is nothing more than a method of measurement. Indeed, several "budgets" are officially issued by the US Government, calculated in different ways to measure different things. And the degree of "balance" which they show varies markedly:

–The traditional *administrative budget* displays expenditures, receipts and new obligational authority, by departments and agencies;

–The *cash budget* consolidates figures on the flow of money between the federal government and the public as a whole;

–The *national income accounts budget* records receipts on an accrual basis, the most accurate system for measuring the impact of spending and taxes on the economy in any one quarter or year.

The difference in the "balance" obtained from these various measurements can be illustrated by the fact that for fiscal 1962, the national income accounts budget will probably come close to being in balance, while the traditional administrative budget will be some $7 billion in the red. Moreover, if the federal government operated on a capital budget, as most businesses do – separating money used for long-term investment from other expenditures – the national accounts over the past 15 years would look very good to budget balancers. Conversely, if private business balanced its books as the government does in its conventional budget, very much less economic growth would take place. In the years since 1929 the country has learned to tolerate a deficit in recession periods, understanding that to balance

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the conventional budget when the economy is on the down grade is to push it down faster.

Thus President Eisenhower accepted the largest peacetime deficit in the country's financial history, $12.4 billion in fiscal 1959, because the recession forced it upon him. But such a departure is considered politically respectable only when the economy is in trouble. Debts incurred to stimulate economic growth, though common in private enterprise, meet resistance when they occur in public accounts, even though debt – private and public combined – has historically grown in almost a constant ratio with the country's gross national product. If we were to take a long-term view of society, we would measure government expenditures, taxes and debt not in dollars but as percentages of the GNP – the sum, that is, of all the goods and services that the society turns out. We would also accept the need to divert part of the flow of current savings into large public investments, exactly as savings are tapped by private enterprise for large private investment.

In his October 26th call for retrenchment, the President said that "were it not for the necessity to devote so much of the national resources to defense, a strong case could be made" for larger federal participation in the joint federal-state-local effort to meet "the growing problems of community development in cities and towns." That statement is sound, but it begs the question. Does the country not have adequate resources to do both? Why should a part of the public's savings not go into improved education, health, research, community and urban development? Is there any economic justification for such cuts as those Secretary Ribicoff is reported to be ordering in the Public Health Service, the Office of Education, the Food and Drug Administration and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation?

When the President appraised the current (fiscal 1962) budget in terms of the effect of its deficit on the domestic price level and on the US balance of payments, he found no evidence that it presented any serious risk. He also forecast that early next year the impact of government spending will change "from a net stimulative to a net restraining influence on the economy." If this is so, will not "postponing the initiation of deferrable projects and phasing out any acceleration of spending which was instituted as an anti-recession measure" leave the country in fiscal 1963 with fairly high unemployment rates and a considerable gap between actual and potential growth? Resources of labor and capital may well be in short supply in fiscal 1963. And if such scarcities should develop, increased taxes would be preferable to retrenchment.

In all this discussion of budget balancing, it should be borne in mind too that the United States has just committed itself to the goal of increasing the sum of the gross national products of the member nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development by 50 percent over the coming decade, to a total of at least $1.25 trillion at the end of 1970. That means an annual US growth rate of 4.2 percent, a rate considerably higher than has been maintained in recent years. How is this to be accomplished? Assurances that the United States intends to maintain a stable currency through careful attention to its international balance of payments, and to the related and also delicate problem of maintaining a stable domestic price level, are all to the good. But assurances that the Administration intends to observe the requirements of the Employment Act of 1946 are likewise all to the good. It is the latter which is in danger of neglect.

What Education Needs

The Catholic bishops have reiterated their opposition to the Administration's major school aid bill, on the ground that it would "discriminate against children attending non-public schools." The bishops have grave doubts about any Federal school bill, but they are apparently prepared to stifle these doubts if doing so will induce the Federal government to reverse the view of all 50 state legislatures that public money cannot be used for church schools. It is doubtful whether the Administration can afford politically to accept the bishops' conditional support, and it is equally doubtful whether a bill which helped parochial schools could in any event pass. Where does that leave education?

In considering alternative legislation the Administration might well ask itself once again whether the schools in Mississippi would really be so much better if they had as much money as the schools in New York? Or schools in Brooklyn solve their problems if they had as much money as schools in Scarsdale?

There is a possibility that the main trouble with American education is not niggardly finance but inept control. The American school is run by local businessmen, politicians, and housewives who imagine that the highest purpose of education is to produce alumni like themselves. This theory was sound enough before the Civil War when, as in the Greek polis, school board members were likely to be the finest flower of the nation. But America is no longer a federation of small towns. Our most gifted citizens are rarely found on school boards and city councils, but on the boards of national corporations and in the councils of national government. If the schools are to aim at multiplying the professional classes, they must be dominated by these classes, and for this to happen they must in large measure be controlled nationally rather than locally.

The Republican Administration grasped the necessity of Federal control when it pushed through the National

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Defense Education Act instead of a state-aid program. Declining to pour good money after bad, the NDEA told the schools exactly how Federal money should be spent, and tried to spend it in ways that would reshape the schools in a modern image. The NDEA has many serious deficiencies, of which the asinine oath for college students and the shameful failure to offer incentives for improving instruction in English composition are perhaps the two most glaring examples. But the NDEA was on the right track, and a more generous and comprehensive NDEA is needed today.

If Mr. Kennedy comes to Congress in January requesting $1 billion a year for education, it should not be for state subsidies but for scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students, research and development of better high school academic programs, special subsidies to keep talented high school science and mathematics teachers from taking industrial jobs, expanded English departments which could make students write something every week, and pilot schools in both urban and rural slums to see if greater investment in these areas would really tap new reservoirs of academic and professional talent. Such a bill would be more likely than state aid to ameliorate the deficiencies of our schools, and it would also be more likely to receive support from the necessary 217 Congressmen.

No Room to Maneuver

Speaking to the Extremists

The President had to decide whether to engage in debate with those who say he isn't "tough" enough with the Communists or to ignore them. His decision, reflected in a blunt address at the University of Washington on November 16, was vindicated within 48 hours by the defensive, almost incoherent rebuttal by Barry Goldwater on television. Mr. Kennedy had intended to take on the alarmists and extremists last October in North Carolina, but did some last-minute blue penciling. Now he has done it, and the effect has been to reassure those who think the President has not done enough educating, that he has not told the public often enough what he has in mind and why.

The Seattle speech was that of a man who is not going to be deflected by either the hot-tempered or the weak-willed. He said, in effect, that a great power can do many things but cannot do everything, "that the US is neither omnipotent nor omniscient, that we cannot always impose our will on the other 94 percent of mankind, that we cannot right every wrong or reverse each adversity, that therefore there cannot be an American solution for every world problem."

Essentially, Mr. Kennedy was addressing himself to two sorts of irresponsibility in public thinking about foreign policy. "On one hand," he said, "are those who urge upon us what I regard to be the pathway to surrender – appeasing our enemies, compromising our honor, purchasing peace at any price . . . if their view had prevailed the world of free choice would be smaller today." At the other extreme are those who equate negotiations with appeasement and whose chauvinistic blustering would mean war, and war "in more places than one."

"Each of these extreme opposites," the President noted, resembles the other. Each believes that we have only two choices – appeasement or war, suicide or surrender, humiliation or holocaust, to be either Red or dead. Each side sees only hard and soft nations, hard and soft policies, hard and soft men. Each believes that any departure from its own course inevitably leads to the other – one group believes that any peaceful solution means appeasement; the other believes that any arms build-up means war. One group regards everyone else as warmongers, the other regards everyone else as appeasers. Neither side admits its path will lead to disaster, but neither can tell us how or where to draw the line once we descend the slippery slopes of either appeasement or constant intervention. In short, while both extremes profess to be the true realists, neither could be more unrealistic."

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Another Congo in Kenya?

Reginald Maudling, Britain's new Secretary of State for the Colonies, is in Kenya searching for ways to liquidate colonialism without opening the door to civil war. Like the Congo, Kenya is sharply split. The colony's two main African parties, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), led by Jomo Kenyatta, and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), led by Ronald Ngala, sharply disagree over the future structure and political institutions of the country. The smaller tribes fear domination by the larger ones; the 175,000 Asians are resigned to African rule; the 68,000 Europeans are apprehensive but virtually powerless.

The Kikuyu and Luo have traditionally been the most educated, the most aggressive and the most nationalist-minded of Kenya's many tribes. Mr. Kenyatta is a Kikuyu; Tom Mboya, one of KANU's founders, is a Luo. Their party draws its support for the most part from urban Africans and the ranks of Kikuyu and Luo and desires a strong central government. KADU, the numerically smaller party, wants regionalism like that suggested in the first months of the Congo's independence, and has threatened civil war if Mr. Maudling does not impose this solution.

To make matters more difficult for Mr. Maudling, there are the Arabs, who live and trade along Kenya's Indian Ocean coast, and the semi-nomadic Somali, who inhabit a vast arid triangle in the northeastern portion of the colony. Both feel themselves culturally superior to the more powerful black Africans and have no wish to be swallowed up in a centralized state. Moreover, the question of the nomads is complicated by the presence of the Somali Republic on Kenya's northeast border. The Kenya Somali want union with the Somali or, as a next best alternative, simply to be left alone to graze their sheep and goats in an autonomous area. The Republic has recently said that it would seek to incorporate its Kenya kin, and their grazing lands. To which Mr. Kenyatta and KANU have replied that Kenya's present territorial integrity must be maintained, whatever the cost.

KADU's answer has been regionalism, the carving up of Kenya and neighboring Tanganyika and Uganda into relatively small tribal units, governed by regional assemblies. In turn a federation of East Africa would assume central responsibilities while leaving to the regions a large but unspecified degree of autonomy.

Regionalism has certain attractions for Great Britain – as it once did in the Congo for Belgium. It would please the white settlers. It would permit Britain to feel that it was effectively honoring treaties with tribal chiefs (which stipulate that land ceded to Queen Victoria must remain British) and the Sultan of Zanzibar (who still owns the 150-mile long, 10-mile wide coastal strip). Yet there is little doubt that regionalism, even if acceptable to Uganda and Tanganyika, would exacerbate the very tribal strife the West seeks to avoid.

Mr. Kenyatta's platform (and his recent visit to London was a successful attempt to explain it) has two parts: on the one hand KANU promises to respect all minority rights. On the other KANU is certain that minorities can only be secure and sizable economic development will only be possible if there is a strong, democratically-elected central government. Mr. Kenyatta's party must now persuade Mr. Maudling that stability in East Africa depends upon *uhura na moja* – unity with independence – and, in particular, that a new Constitutional conference should be convened early next year, followed by general elections and the grant of self-government.

Leadership in The House

When the Majority Leader of the Senate, "Mr. Republican" Robert A. Taft, died in the sixth month of Dwight D. Eisenhower's first term in the White House, the President of the United States and his wife drove to Georgetown to call on Mrs. Taft. The President took her hands in his and, according to Taft's biographer, William S. White, repeated, "I don't know what I'll do without him – I don't know what I'll do without him."

President Eisenhower, according to Robert J. Donovan, told his Cabinet that his Administration "would remain on the sidelines absolutely. . . . He hoped, he said, that Administration officials would refrain even from expressing their personal hopes as to who would succeed Taft." As a result he got the arbitrary William Knowland, whom Taft had installed as temporary leader during his illness.

Now another new President faces the loss of a strong man in a Congress which, like Eisenhower's, is only narrowly and only sometimes his. Without Rayburn's firm backing, the bill to relax Rules Committee control over the House would not have passed in the last session; there were only five votes to spare as it was. Without that change most of the other Kennedy measures that passed would have been bottled up in committee, as they had been before. And what went through the first session of the 87th Congress was the easy part of the Kennedy program. Even if Mr. Rayburn's health had held up, the second session outlook would have been grim for the President.

Mr. Rayburn himself once remarked that, "you can run the House from the Speaker's chair or from the floor." The next occupant of the Speaker's chair seems certain to be Rep. John W. McCormack. The only open question – and it is the critical one – is who will succeed Mr. McCormack as Majority Leader. To date, the

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only avowed candidates are Rep. Carl Albert of Oklahoma and Rep. Richard Bolling of Missouri. Representative Albert is popular, easy-going and has a liberal voting record – with the rather important exception of his having voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1957. Bolling, on the other hand, is the most forceful and adept strategist the Democrats have in the House. He was Mr. Sam's most useful legislative lieutenant. With Mr. Sam gone, his skills become indispensable if the winning combinations of votes are to be put together for the White House program in 1962.

Mr. Kennedy, as a Congressman, was inclined to be a traditionalist on procedures, and a strong believer in the principle of divided powers between the Executive and Legislative branches. But since he first became a candidate for President he has emphasized the special responsibility of the President under our kind of government. "I believe that our system of checks and balances, our whole constitutional system, can only operate under a strong President," he has said. "The Constitution is a very wise document. It permits the President to assume just about as much power as he is capable of handling. If he fails, it is his fault, not the system's." If Mr. Kennedy hesitates to use his power as President to make sure that its most competent men are chosen to lead the House, without respect to tradition, it will, as he says, be his fault, not the system's.

Judges of Obscenity

On July 13, the Chief of Police of Provincetown, Massachusetts, brought a complaint against William V. Ward for publishing a story by Hubert Selby, Jr., called "Tralala," in the *Provincetown Review*, a little magazine recently started by a group of young men with more idealism than dollars. The complaint alleged that the magazine was obscene, indecent and impure, in violation of the applicable Massachusetts statute. The case was tried without a jury, before Judge Robert A. Welsh of the Provincetown District Court who, after hearing evidence, fined the defendant $1,000. An appeal was then taken to the Superior Court in nearby Barnstable.

"Tralala" is about a prostitute without a heart of gold – vicious, cruel and dehumanized by inheritance and environment. The moral is an old one – the wages of sin are death. Since it is told through the medium of Tralala's myopic vision and limited vocabulary the language largely consists of four-letter words.

Mr. Reuben Goodman, of Boston, who represented the defendant, and Professor Mark Howe, of the Harvard Law School, shortly after the judgment of the Provincetown Court, reported the case to Edward J. McCormack, Attorney General of Massachusetts. Mr. McCormack, after personally reading the story and reading the transcript of the trial, ordered that the complaint be dismissed. It was the Attorney General's opinion that "Tralala" was not obscene within the criteria established by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts in its most recent decisions, and by the Supreme Court of the United States.

What is interesting about the case is not merely that the action of Attorney General McCormack foreshadows a more common sense approach to censorship by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It may be even more relevant to note the questions raised by the testimony in Provincetown with respect to who is competent to draw the line between art and pornography.

The four experts testifying for the defense – Stanley Kunitz and Allen Tate as creative writers and critics, Jason Epstein, Vice President of Random House, as a publisher, and Norman Podhoretz, the editor-in-chief of *Commentary* – believed that the tale was a work of literary merit and moral power and therefore not obscene. But, Mr. Tate went on, "Tralala" raises an issue that history has not been able finally to settle – "Is a literary work of high merit to be condemned because it presents odious language?" It is the same question that was raised by James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and recently by the republication of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. In Mr. Tate's opinion, "The agency by means of which a democratic society may protect the immature mind from the corrupting influence of salacious literature must be established by an authority which can be accepted as reasonable and superior to individual prejudice." That policemen and politicians are rarely qualified to exercise this authority was shown again several weeks ago in Maryland, when County Manager Mason A. Butcher ordered Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* removed from the Montgomery County public libraries. Mr. Butcher had not read the book, though he "saw quite a few pages." And on that basis he felt competent to classify the novel as "obscene."

Mr. Hogan's Decision

New York is a city of marvels. Its Mayor bites the hands of the bosses who made him Mayor in the first place, and is rewarded by being re-elected as an insurgent. And now its District Attorney has decided to "abide by" the law. The two events are unconnected. The point is merely that the second no less than the first was front-page news.

District Attorney Frank S. Hogan's noteworthy decision was to discontinue use of wiretap evidence in prosecutions conducted by his office, because tapping telephone wires is forbidden by federal law; it is, indeed, a federal crime. His was a *difficult* decision, the

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New York Times allowed editorially, "but we think [a] correct one."

Mr. Hogan did not announce that officers subject to his jurisdiction would stop tapping wires as well as ceasing to use the product of the tap in court; that would be going too far. Yet the Federal Communications Act which forbids tapping, has been on the books for 27 years. The Supreme Court first held that tapping by federal law enforcement officers was illegal as long ago as 1937. It declared unanimously in 1957 what seemed to follow not unnaturally, namely, that tapping was equally illegal under the same statute when done by state law enforcement officers. This has proved to be sufficiently explicit for Mr. Hogan, but it took him five years to reach the "difficult-but-we-think-correct" conclusion that he ought to accept it.

The Plague in France

Benedetto Croce once remarked that when one could see something on the horizon it was too late. General de Gaulle again has said – this time on his tour of Corsica, flanked by a small army of some 4,000 security guards – that he sees the end of the eight-year war in Algeria. And the new Algerian Foreign Minister, Sa'ad Dahlab, is conducting himself in a manner which suggests that serious secret negotiations are making some progress – despite the latest obstacle in the form of a hunger strike by the Algerian rebel leader, Mohammed Ben Bella, who has been in French hands since 1956.

But whatever the result of the negotiations, the terrorism and counter-terrorism in Algeria and in France has produced a moral plague which the late Albert Camus, who was born in Algeria and used his native soil as the setting for his novel, *The Plague*, did not foresee. The fanatics of the so-called Secret Army Organization, officered mostly by Frenchmen but manned in large part by adventurers and mercenaries of German, Spanish, Italian, Maltese, Greek, even Polish origin, are spreading death and terrorism in the name of a French Algeria. And the Parisian police, presumably struggling to uphold law and order against the secret conspirators of the French military, repress an entirely peaceful demonstration by Moslem Algerians in Paris who were protesting a racist curfew. The participants in this mass demonstration carried no weapons and took no aggressive step – unless their mere presence in orderly formations is taken as aggression. Yet in the streets, in hallways, in back alleys, in metro stations, and in the Palais des Sports where many of them were herded, the cold-blooded brutality of the police toward them was worse than the comparable treatment of Jews in Paris under Nazi rule. Days afterward maimed bodies still were being found in the Seine and in woods around the city. Some Frenchmen protested, but most seemed indifferent, as if such conduct were now a matter of course.

Marshal Petain who condoned such things by silence was senile. De Gaulle, at 71, is not.

Once Upon a Network

Radio Pacifica's listener-supported New York FM radio station, WBAI, broadcast a symposium last month titled "Which Way America?" in which Lawrence Dennis advocated some form of fascism, Norman Thomas supported socialism, A. J. Muste spoke for Communism, and Raymond Moley for democracy.

The spirit animating the discussion was summed up by Moley, who said: "I was talking to a very high official in the city of Washington the other day, and I said, 'Why can't we have in the Wagner Bill real democratic collective bargaining by proportional representation?'; and he said, 'The leaders of the American Federation of Labor say that if there's a democratic means of selecting the delegates in an industry to bargain, we'll get some Communists.' And I said, 'I don't believe in that. If there are 10 percent of Communists in a plant and they demand a right to be represented, then they have the right to have 10 percent of the delegates.'

"I think I'm more democratic than the American Federation of Labor; and I'm for collective bargaining first, last and always!"

In offering this program to its listeners, WBAI rightly felt that it had taken a courageous stand for free speech. But when "Which Way America" was first broadcast, 26 years ago, it was a regular part of the "Town Meeting of the Air" series and carried by the NBC network.

Brother Robert on Tour

Quiet official explorations are reportedly being made in major capitals of Europe and in Teheran in preparation for the as yet unannounced January foreign tour of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. It is said that the foreign offices of the governments concerned, not the legal departments, are being informed, and that the President's brother is expected to confer with chiefs of state on world issues.

Some months ago, it will be recalled, when the word got out that the Attorney General had received Soviet Ambassador Menshikov, Rep. John Lindsay of New York wrote a letter demanding to know of Dean Rusk who was running US foreign policy. The answer then was that the initiative had been the Ambassador's, not Mr. Kennedy's. That will not suffice this time.

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Camel Bites Dachshund

by Gus Tyler and David Wells

On November 10, in broad daylight, the New York State Legislature, meeting in a special session called by Governor Nelson Rockefeller, stole away enough Democratic Congressional districts to give the GOP an added margin of 10 to 12 seats from New York in the next Congress. In the last election, New York State sent 22 Democrats and 21 Republicans to the House of Representatives. In the next election, given the identical voting pattern, 25 or 26 Republicans and 15 or 16 Democrats will be elected. A Democratic margin of one will be converted to a Republican margin of at least nine – not because of any switches on the part of the voters, but simply because of a shifting of Congressional district boundary lines!

Gerrymandering is not, of course, a peculiarly Republican practice. In California, where, a decade ago, the GOP drew the district lines to give themselves a marked advantage, the Democrats having captured control of the legislature, turned the tables this year. They created districts which range in population from 338,000 to 592,000; they drew lines designed to lump as many Republicans into as few districts as possible; they carved out one T-shaped district in Los Angeles County which dangles a long thin tail for many miles down the Pacific shoreline. Oddly enough, more than half the Republican members of the California assembly voted in favor of a Democratic redistricting bill – reportedly as a result of a deal which strengthened the seats of some Republicans at the expense of other Republicans.

But there are relatively few Democratic gerrymanders directed against Republicans for the simple reason that Democrats only rarely have the opportunity. In most of the two-party states of the Northeast, Midwest and West, Republicans with their voting strength centered in the overrepresented rural areas have maintained control of the state legislatures, and it is the legislatures which draw the district lines. Currently, for example, aside from the Southern and border states, Democrats control fewer than one-third of the legislatures. The only major states in this group are California and Massachusetts, and in the latter state the veto-power of a Republican Governor has created a stalemate over redistricting. In the South, most of the gerrymandering is done by *rural* Democrats to *urban* Democrats.

In New York, the boundaries of the new districts were not revealed either to the public or the legislators until the day the bill was introduced. In response to demands for public hearings, State Senator McEwen, chairman of the committee which drew the new lines, stated that reapportionment was "strictly a technical subject" and that "no argument offered at a public hearing, no matter how emotional, political or impassioned it might be, can change a census statistic." After the outlines of the gerrymander were made public, it was easy to understand the Senator's reluctance to face a public hearing over the projected larceny.

The newly-drawn Congressional district boundary lines were engineered with a clear purpose in mind: to eliminate as many Democratic districts as possible, to create as many new GOP districts as possible, and to keep existing GOP districts as safely Republican as possible. The primary objective in Upstate New York was to reduce the number of Democratic representatives from three to two. It is within New York City, however, that the art of gerrymandering can be seen in its clearest form.

A brief glance at the shapes of some of the new districts is enough to make a drinker go on the wagon. The map on page 10 reveals a zoo-full of fantastically-shaped creatures slithering through the streets of New York City. Among the Brooklyn *fauna* are a camel biting the tail of a barking dachshund (the 14th CD), a mechanical dinosaur with key attached (the 15th CD) and a vulture (the 16th CD) – the vulture is flying towards its newly-laid egg: Staten Island. Also in Brooklyn one finds an X-ray of a badly-shattered elbow (the 10th CD), an accusing finger (the 12th CD) and a silhouette of General Washington in uniform (the 11th CD). Up in The Bronx, the Legislature has carved out a fiery dragon (the 24th CD) and a snake suffering from indigestion after having swallowed a giraffe (the 23rd CD). In the Queens cages are a chicken with its head being cut off (the 6th CD), a shmoo (the 7th CD) and an upside-down pregnant crocodile (the 8th CD). Upstate New York has been spared from the beasts, but the 35th CD is clearly a submarine extending from Schenectady to Rochester, with a periscope poked into Lake Ontario – apparently about to torpedo Toronto.

The contorted shape of the Brooklyn districts results from the effort of the Legislature to create at

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The New York City Congressional Menagerie

least two GOP seats in heavily-Democratic Brooklyn. This can only be done by stringing together many widely-separated pockets of Republican strength. The two districts thus drawn are the 15th and 16th. The 15th district connects normally-Republican Bay Ridge in the southwestern corner of the Borough with several Republican-leaning upper income blocks in Brooklyn Heights (in northwest Brooklyn) and in the Prospect Park area (in central Brooklyn). These neighborhoods are connected only by a large cemetery.

The 16th district includes Staten Island – which is to the west of Brooklyn – and a remote Republican pocket on the opposite (southeastern) side of Brooklyn. The two parts of the 16th CD are separated not only by the waters of the Narrows and the Atlantic Ocean, but by two other districts! Another Brooklyn monstrosity is the 14th district, which consists of a northern section (Greenpoint and Williamsburg) and a southern section (Red Hook and Erie Basin) connected by a sort of "Polish corridor" some nine blocks long and one block wide, running between an express highway and the East River. (Several wharves but no homes are located within the corridor.)

In The Bronx, the men charged with drawing up the new lines faced a problem: how to keep the district now represented by Congressman Paul Fino safely Republican. Since the last redistricting, a decade ago, many parts of the district have had a heavy influx of Democrats. But the district-drawers got around the problem easily – if not neatly. They simply lopped increasingly-Democratic Riverdale out of the district, tacked it on to the neighboring, heavily Democratic 23rd district, and then drew a boundary between the 23rd and 24th districts which is so irregular as to defy description.

Queens County posed a relatively easy problem. Ten years ago, the districts were drawn so as to give both parties two Queens seats. In 1960, however, the Democrats violated the rules. They won a third seat, leaving the GOP with but one. However, with a little stretching here, some shortening there, and the creation of a few carefully-placed prongs, salients and indentations, the chances are good that the two-two split will be restored.

The shapes of the new districts do not tell the whole story. There are also wide disparities in district populations which range from a high of 460,000 to a low of 352,000. The average population of the five Brooklyn districts conceded to the Democrats is 444,000. The average for the two Republican districts is 351,000. The average population of the three Manhattan Democratic districts is 439,000. The one GOP district has a population of only 382,000. (In defending the redistricting, the Republicans pointed out that the average population of the New York City districts was about the same as the average population of those Upstate, but they failed to mention these great disparities in population between different districts in the City.)

The re-gerrymandering of New York State Congressional lines is an excellent example of the way inequality at the state level of government is transmitted to the federal level. Gross over-representation of the state's rural areas in the Legislature makes it virtually impossible for the Republicans to lose control of either house in Albany. The Legislature, in turn, carves out the Congressional district boundaries in a way that results in GOP over-representation in the state's Congressional delegation.

The election of 1958 provided a perfect illustration of the way in which the manipulation of district lines and the juggling of district populations can distort the complexion of both the state and federal law-making bodies. In that year, Democratic candidates for the New York State Senate received 50.3 percent of the state-wide vote, but Republicans won a 34-24 edge in State Senate seats. Democratic candidates for the State Assembly received 50.2 percent of the state-wide vote, but the GOP won a 92-58 edge in Assembly seats. Democratic Congressional candidates received 50.7 percent of the state-wide vote, but Republicans won 24 Congressional seats to the Democrats' 19! Thus were Democratic majorities in the polling booths converted into Republican majorities in the legislative chambers.

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Why Castro Can't Be Neutral

by Ernst Halperin

Until 1955 both American and Soviet foreign policy were dominated by Stalin's view of the "two camps" locked in mortal combat. A Latin American country which wanted political or economic support from Russia as an alternative to the United States would unquestionably have had to join the Communist bloc and subordinate itself to Moscow's orders. Given only this alternative, Latin American leaders inevitably preferred to remain tied to the United States. When Khrushchev began to gain control over Soviet foreign policy, however, a new flexibility appeared. He not only sought a rapprochement with Tito but also began to encourage "Titoism" within the bourgeois camp, notably through the arms deal with Nasser. The state visit to India and Burma and the peace treaty for Austria, also made 1955 a critical year in the evolution of neutralism. In 1956 Khrushchev sought to legitimize his new policy of encouraging "non-alignment." He attacked Stalin and his doctrine of the "two camps" at the 20th Party Conference, announcing the emergence of a third neutral "Camp of Peace."

In Latin America, as elsewhere, many moderate non-Communists hoped that this dogma would inaugurate a new era in international relations, during which underdeveloped countries could turn to both East and West for assistance, without accepting the economic or political hegemony of either. Cuba was the first real test case.

If Premier Khrushchev was prepared to support a neutral Popular Front regime under Castro, many statesmen anticipated that America would also do so. If this had happened, many Latin American liberals would eventually have followed Castro's course. We know that Khrushchev hoped for such an outcome. More than once during 1960 he urged Castro to moderate his anti-Americanism and avoid a complete break. When militants within the *Partido Socialista Popular*, like Blas Roca, sought to unite Castro's "26th of July" movement with their Communist party, turning Cuba into an orthodox Bolshevik dictatorship, the Russians were appalled. Khrushchev knew that this would convince the great majority of other Latin American leaders that real neutralism was, after all, impractical. And he suspected that if Latin Americans were confronted only with a stark choice between domination by Moscow or Washington, most would stick with Washington. So he tacitly backed a moderate splinter group within the Cuban Communist Party which urged a Popular Front, headed by Castro and including not only the Communists but other parties. But this splinter group was defeated, and Blas Roca's merger was eventually forced on the unorganized "26th of July" party.

In order to understand why Khrushchev's hopes were not fulfilled, it is necessary to realize that unlike Stalin he has never enjoyed absolute control over Communist Parties outside the USSR, such as the *Partido Socialista Popular*. Nor has his pro-neutralist policy been warmly received by these foreign parties. Like liberals in backward countries who feel betrayed when America backs an anti-Russian dictatorship instead of a middle-class revolution, most Communists in backward countries feel betrayed when Khrushchev backs an anti-American nationalist instead of a proletarian revolution. Egyptian Communists admit, for example, that Nasser is a thorn in the side of the West, but they also emphasize that he suppresses Marxist propaganda and puts Communists in jail. Few Egyptian Communists want to postpone making their own revolution just to help the Soviet Union in her maneuvers against the West.

As one neutralist leader after another cracked down on local Communist revolutionaries, the chorus of opposition to Khrushchev's policies swelled. The Iraqui Party was put out because Khrushchev sent arms to Qassem, propping up the very regime local Communists were trying to overthrow. The Indian Communists, having been pushed out of Kerala by the "neutral" Nehru, were inevitably annoyed when Khrushchev continued to extend a friendly hand to the Indian Prime Minister. Perhaps most important of all, the Chinese Communists were appalled by Khrushchev's temporizing. Mao and his colleagues undoubtedly saw the parallel between Stalin's support for Chiang Kai-shek against them in 1927 and Khrushchev's support for Nehru and Nasser in 1955, and they evidently suspected the USSR of a penchant for backing "bourgeois nationalists" who start well but finish last. By 1958 Peking had definitely committed itself to backing militant disciplined Communist cells rather than amorphous nationalist movements, and had begun to com-

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pete with Moscow for influence over Communist Parties in the backward countries. The result was that at the 21st Party Congress in 1960 Khrushchev backed down, agreeing to support only those neutralists who were on good terms with the local Communist Party. Had he not done so his leadership of the international movement would have been seriously threatened.

Translating the Party Congress Debate

The Sino-Soviet dialogue was, as always, conducted almost exclusively in the language of Marxist-Leninist dialectic. This language has no words for the specific and the particular. Every matter of practical politics, down to the most sordid border squabble, has to be discussed in terms of abstract principles. This so irritates many Anglo-Saxons that they dismiss all Communist ideological discussions as mere claptrap – and thus remain totally ignorant of the conflicting tendencies within the Communist alliance. Other Westerners, intrigued by the idea that their opponents not only make but listen to six-hour speeches, leap to the conclusion that Communist policy is actually dictated by theoretical consideration. The fact is, however, that Communist like capitalist policy is shaped by practical considerations, but unlike capitalist policy, is discussed in theoretical terms. If the layman learns to translate Marxist-Leninist terminology into everyday Western language, he can follow the dispute quite closely.

A Western diplomat might, for example, express his attitude toward Nasser this way: "We don't like him and we don't like his system, but for the time being it is expedient and in our national interest to support him."

Khrushchev is certainly not above such homely thoughts, and he may even express them to his close friends. But he does not dare put his policy this way at a big Party Congress, for to trained Communist ears such a statement contains two serious heresies: opportunism ("it is expedient") and nationalism ("in our national interest"). So instead Khrushchev says, "In the present stage of historical development bourgeois nationalism in the colonial and newly-liberated countries plays a progressive role." This sounds odd to Western ears, but to anyone familiar with Marxist-Leninist jargon it just means that the USSR finds it expedient to support Nasser – and Nehru too.

Similarly, another Western diplomat might say of Nasser, "We don't like him and we don't like his system. He seemed all right when he was out of power, attacking the old feudal system which obviously had to go, but now he's in he's become impossible. He jams our radio broadcasts, he arrests our friends and agents, and he intrigues against us internationally. Furthermore he demands foreign aid from the Great Powers which we could use to good advantage in our own country." This is exactly what the Chinese Communists probably say to one another, but it is not what they say at the Party Congress. They answer Khrushchev in Marxist-Leninist language, announcing that "Bourgeois nationalism no longer plays a progressive role once it has come to power in the newly-liberated countries, for it then tends to compromise with the imperialists and become reactionary in domestic policy." Note that this formulation leaves the Chinese free to support bourgeois revolutions such as Algeria's, but then justifies keeping the new regime unstable once it has come to power. A nation on the make like China does not want international stability of any sort – yet.

Those who believe that Communist policy is really determined by ideological considerations would assume that if the Chinese opposed bourgeois nationalism in Egypt and India they would also have to oppose it in Guinea and Cuba. But the Chinese approve of Sekou Toure and Castro, for they listen attentively to Peking as well as Moscow, and allow Chinese agents freedom to intrigue. Still, supporting a non-Communist regime merely as a propaganda base – and therefore denying the local proletariat the revolution for which it presumably yearns – would clearly be callous opportunism, and backing a government merely because it respects the Chinese as much as the Russians would obviously be vulgarly nationalistic. So, one might think, Toure and Castro must be denounced. Yet there is another possibility. These two leaders have, after all, carried out drastic nationalization and agrarian reform. They do allow full freedom for "progressive forces." Perhaps they are not really bourgeois nationalists like Nasser and Nehru. Perhaps they are really "national democrats." And perhaps, say the Chinese, "national democracy" still plays a progressive role at this stage of historical development.

When the Party Congress declared in November, 1960, for "national democracy" and against "bourgeois nationalism," most Western observers regarded the declaration as just another exercise in Marxist-Leninist metaphysics. But Castro was probably not so naïve. For the statement implicitly condemned all those neutral regimes which Khrushchev had assiduously cultivated (*i.e.* Iraq, Egypt, India), and supported those of no strategic importance to him (*i.e.* Guinea and Cuba). This shift, taken in conjunction with Khrushchev's failure to impose a moderate Popular Front policy on the Cuban Communist Party, must have suggested to Castro that the wind was currently blowing from Peking. Under such circumstances neutralism seemed increasingly impractical. He knew that the Americans were helping prepare an invasion of Cuba, and that as a neutralist, even a nationally democratic neutralist, he was as expendable to Khrushchev as Jacobo Arbenz of

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Guatemala had been. In the short run his main hope therefore lay with Blas Roca's well-organized local Communist Party, which was pressing him to establish a party dictatorship by merging his "26th of July" movement with the Communist Party. In the long run his hope lay with the militant Chinese, who seemed willing to risk war with America, rather than with the cautious Khrushchev who was mainly interested in expanding his sphere of influence in neighboring countries.

Just before the invasion last April Castro finally abandoned neutralism, declaring his a "socialist" revolution. In the language of Marxism-Leninism this was tantamount to a formal declaration of adherence to the Communist bloc, and it was followed by the integration of Castro's amorphous 26th of July movement with Blas Roca's Communist Party. By July, when Castro finally announced that such a union was "imminent," it had already been completed. Pending official recognition at the 21st Party Congress the merger was called the "Integrated Revolutionary Organizations" (ORI). It was this body, not the defunct *Partido Socialista Popular*, which sent delegates to Moscow last month.

Khrushchev's refusal to recognize Cuba as a full-fledged member of the Communist bloc at this year's Party Conference may be attributed to a variety of causes. Perhaps he was reluctant to destroy the last vestiges of the myth that *fidelismo* is merely a Latin American equivalent of Nasserism, and thus destroy whatever appeal the Cuban example still has to Latin American neutralists. Perhaps he was simply bitter about the fact that the Cubans had not handled their revolution as he wanted them to for the sake of his own diplomatic machinations. Perhaps he was reluctant to make too outspoken a commitment to an experiment in Communism which is neither economically viable nor militarily defensible. But no matter what his reasoning, there can be little doubt that the outcome of the Cuban revolution was a bitter setback, not only for his hopes of neutralizing the rest of South America, but for his hopes of keeping the Chinese Communists in their place.

How We Pay Our Bills

by Edwin L. Dale Jr.

The year 1961 is already certain to have a special place in the economic history books. But as the year draws to a close in comparative calm, it is impossible to say which of two versions of the year the historians will find themselves writing:

1. "In 1961, the warning signs were there for all to see. But the authorities refused to treat them seriously. They developed a few devices to cope with the symptoms of the trouble, while taking a conscious decision not to do anything more fundamental. And as we all know, it was only a little later the collapse occurred."

2. "Under pressure of events in 1961, the national and international authorities developed a series of techniques to cope with the strains inherent in the system. But they wisely refused to panic and to heed the dire warnings that the whole system must be changed. They continued to believe that the system itself was sound, and they were proved right. Who can say how much inflation and other trouble their courageous decision has saved us?"

These two hypothetical accounts – one or the other of them will surely confront the student of a decade from now – refer to a particular aspect of the world economy: the one that has caused the most trouble in 1961. It is not unemployment or taxation or interest rates or tariffs. It is the system of international exchange – the way nations pay each other and hold cash to meet their bills.

As long as the system is working, few people are even aware of its existence and fewer still of its mechanisms. Even its troubles in 1961 – when it continued to work – received comparatively few headlines, despite a few flurries over gold. But if it should break down, all of us would feel the consequences, quite possibly in the form of another depression. In late 1960 and in 1961 the system was subject to very severe stress and it survived, thanks in part to a series of sensible actions by the financial authorities in London, Washington, Frankfurt, Zurich, Paris, Amsterdam and Basle. The question remains for the historians, however, whether these actions were a last patching up of a cracking structure, or a series of minor reforms adequate to preserve a payments system better than any alternative. The "system" is an odd child. Some claim its birth at a little-remembered international economic conference

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at Genoa in 1922. Since then it has developed with remarkably little conscious planning, shaped partly by habit and tradition, partly by a few key national decisions. It has a name: The Gold Exchange Standard. Its essential characteristic is that nations hold their international reserves – their cash in the bank to pay other nations when their international transactions are in deficit – partly in gold and partly in "exchange," in the form of one of two reserve currencies, the dollar and the pound.

These currencies are held because the holders trust them – because they can convert them at any time into other currency or into gold, at known values. Deficits and surpluses in international payments can be and are normally met by rises and falls in foreign holdings of pounds and dollars and not by physical shipments of gold as in the old days. Not only is this convenient, it is essential; there is simply not enough monetary gold in the world to provide a sufficient "international money supply," sufficient reserves for all the nations.

The Fatal Flaw

The weakness, or vulnerability, of the system is apparent from its basis: its dependence on only two key national currencies. Like other nations, Britain and the United States have international transactions, and sometimes they run deficits. Unfortunately, in the past decade they have run deficits all too frequently. This has pumped more and more dollars and pounds out into the world, but the gold backing behind the two currencies has not increased. It has even diminished.

If France or Brazil runs an international payments deficit for too long, eventually there occurs a "flight" from the franc or cruzeiro; the nation's reserves are exhausted, and it is forced to devalue its currency. This is painful for Frenchmen and Brazilians – among other things in the form of higher prices – but to no one else.

But if deficits followed by a "flight" should exhaust the gold reserves of the US or Britain, and they should be forced to devalue, the pain would not only be their own. All who held their money would be hurt. It would be exactly like the failure of a bank. Not only would there be actual loss, but the shock to confidence would be incalculable. World trade, and hence world prosperity, would be drastically affected.

Bank failures are dynamite, as the depression in the United States in the 1930's showed. Both its critics and its defenders agree that the Gold Exchange Standard is subject to bank failure.

Within the space of 12 months, from August, 1960, through July, 1961, sizable "runs" occurred successively on the world's two banks, the US and Britain. Neither bank failed. Britain (the more vulnerable of the two for the moment) was saved by a series of *ad hoc* international support actions, largely in the form of loans, that were a credit to the tough and skeptical national officials who performed them. They "acted international." The British crisis was cleverly prevented from spilling over into a second crisis for the US partly by some new techniques developed by the Treasury of the United States.

But the events of those 12 months – including a few actions by national authorities that were more selfish and panicky than big-minded – awakened an extraordinary burst of international head-shaking and article-writing about the nature of the system itself. Critiques and proposals by Triffin, Stamp, Bernstein, Zolotas, Heilperin and Rueff, none of them radicals, got the widest publicity. Practically all of the commentators concluded that the system needs either outright scrapping or major surgical reform lest a collapse occur, though the prescriptions differed. Even the role of that venerable metal, gold, was brought into question.

The small international club of finance ministers and central bankers of Europe and North America, headed by that brilliant international civil servant, Per Jacobson, chief of the International Monetary Fund, read and digested the commentary during the hours they were not saving the two banks. They are the men who run the system and make the decisions.

In September, 1961, they met in Vienna and with remarkable unanimity gave the world their conclusion: The system does not need fundamental reform. In private and public they tackled the critiques and proposals of the commentators, and one by one knocked them down.

Their arguments were ingenious and persuasive. But in a field where one must necessarily deal with unknowns, it was plain that a single overriding consideration was behind the conclusion of the men in power: a reform of the system, they feared, would open a pandora's box of inflation. The present system, with all its flaws, imposes a discipline on nations – including the two key nations – that is badly needed against the temptations of politicians to spend and cheapen money.

These are men who have resisted the profligate tendencies of politicians all their lives, often to the great benefit of their countries. Their conclusion was both human and understandable.

But was it right? The decision of 1961 against reform was a victory for conservatism. Looking back over the past four decades, it seems clear that in the great economic and financial decisions the conservatives have sometimes been right but more often wrong.

The great economic triumph of our time is the discovery of how to prevent severe depression and prolonged unemployment – on a national scale. But will a flaw, a remediable flaw, in the international system bring on one last crisis? The economics student reading his books in 1970 will know the verdict on the great decision of 1961. We cannot know it now.

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Youth Will Be Served

Youth will be served, and why not? But youth is served an ill turn when it is given a task that it cannot perform and then is blamed for failing.

A case in point is that of those earnest souls, including the distinguished Senators from various states, who are appalled by learning that in hauling young aliens in to be processed in our educational mills we have created some virulent enemies of the United States.

These souls obviously believed that foreign youth, once taught to understand us, would love us, and that four years in American colleges lead to understanding. Both assumptions are doubtful. There is always the possibility that the better foreigners understand us, the more reasons they will find for hating us; and there are some institutions among us called colleges where one would understand America no better than Assam.

For an alien to spend four years in the atmosphere surrounding the Eta Bita Pi fraternity on the campus of old Siwash would hardly qualify him as an authority on Americanism, and while this danger may be growing less with the passing years other travesties on higher learning are multiplying.

But even so, the fact that some of the most violently anti-American leaders in other countries were educated in the United States is by no means as appalling as some people seem to believe. All it proves is that we still cling to the naïvely arrogant delusion that we have only to be known to be loved. The truth is that when any culture that is profoundly, not merely superficially alien is brought into intimate contact with our own, painful friction results.

Mr. Krishna Menon, for example, was certainly not misled by the puerilities that afflict Old Siwash. He was nurtured by stately British universities, and if he doesn't understand Western political philosophy there is no hope that it can be taught. Yet his opinion of it is so far from flattering that he has become, single-handed, a Problem with a cap P.

It does not necessarily follow, however, either that universities were guilty of folly, or the student of lack of diligence. Krishna Menon is simply a man not intellectually adapted to acceptance of Western philosophy. It is based upon certain premises that he does not find credible and the extent of his understanding emphasizes the incredibility. There are many like him in the rising generation and to bring them here in the hope that they will be convinced is a waste of effort.

But there are other reasons for bringing them. While it is impossible to compel liking, it is entirely possible to compel respect. Our economic and military forces compel it now, for they are obviously superior to those of most of the other nations. Our intellectual vigor and cultural wealth would command equal respect if they were as obviously superior.

Unfortunately, they are not. An intelligent student from one of the older civilizations of Europe or Asia, brought into contact with the best minds in America might be favorably impressed, but he would not be overwhelmed, as he would be by the extent of our military and economic power. A dull fellow, in the same circumstances, would not be impressed at all, because he would not understand at all.

But what is to be gained by bringing over mediocre students to be subjected to mediocre instruction? Certainly no more than is to be gained by subjecting the same kind of American students to the same kind of instruction, and on balance, less, since transporting the foreigners is expensive.

There is, indeed, one possible profit that might be derived from the present scheme, although the scheme's supporters do not advertise it widely. There is a possibility that when a sufficient number of foreign students have been put through our pseudo-colleges, their critcism will become so loud and so caustic that it will sting us into taking a realistic look at these frauds. If we could once see them for the shabby impostures that they are, we might be moved either to abolish them or to transform them into genuine institutions of learning; and in the latter case, future generations of Americans would profit enormously.

Unhappily the political difficulties in the way make the realization of such a plan remote indeed. Every one-building "university" in the most forlorn backwater of civilization would denounce it as undemocratic; and they would be assisted by every huge educational rolling-mill now turning out bachelors of tap-dancing and doctors of mumblety-peg. The political drag of these monsters is enough to scare the average Congressman into a fit of the vapors by its mere mention. The chances are, therefore, that the scandal of the student-exchange program will have to grow much worse before effective steps can be taken to reduce it.

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The Flaw in John O'Hara

by Irving Howe

Were mimicry the soul of art, O'Hara would a master be. Not many writers know as much as he does about the social surface of American life, nor are as committed to so inflexible and in-

Assembly
by John O'Hara
(Random House; $5.95)

genuous a belief in its significance. O'Hara's prosperity has enabled him to keep mobile and avoid those academic jobs that confine so many other writers, while his tastes have led him to a beguiled absorption in the ways of the upper middle class.

O'Hara's new book contains 26 stories, of which I judge four to be successful, a good rate for any writer; but even in his failures there is something to be learned, particularly about that segment of the new rich that has lately been showing signs of wishing to constitute itself as a self-made gentry.

As always in his stories, O'Hara has an eye for the details of the physical setting in which civilized relations are enacted: he knows about *things* and believes in their fetishistic power. His ear is still very keen, though he has become somewhat vain about it, with the result that patches of dialogue stand out as displays of expertness breaking the line of his stories. He builds these stories with the uninspired conscientiousness of a good carpenter who trusts more to measurement than imagination, and this is not always so great a fault as some modern readers are likely to suppose.

Yet O'Hara is not a first-rate writer, and the main reason is that he does not have a first-rate mind. Writers possessed by a vision, like Faulkner, can for a time dispense with the ordinary uses of intelligence; but writers like O'Hara, who depend mostly upon observation of daily life, need the kind of intelligence that enables them to move beyond the bric-a-brac of what they observe. O'Hara's mind, however, is imprisoned in the kind of small-spirited and skeptical materialism which in this country tends too often to be mistaken for worldliness. It is a leaden, literalistic and insistently mundane mind, and it has an embarrassing way of sliding from pseudo-masculine coarseness to whiskey sentimentalism.

Time after time O'Hara brings together fresh material but is unable to do anything except present it. Because he has serious literary ambitions and has pushed his craft as far as he can, he knows by now that something more than mere presentation is needed. He therefore falls back upon devices of shock and melodrama – a plot switch, a gimmick, a radical drop in tone – to gain the imaginative coherence he has not really earned. Yet even this fault, grave as it is, might not be so hopelessly damaging were it not that his intellectual weakness is reinforced by an unattractive temperament. O'Hara is a peculiarly unwinning writer: a mood of heavy truculence hangs over his work like smog in California.

Still, one learns something here, for his stories, unlike much current fiction, are about the public world and can at least offer news. In this latest group he observes that as a result of several decades of prosperity there is forming in the United States a new gentry which consists of people whose money is fresh, who have no particular family tradition they care to proclaim, who show little concern with the substance of culture but a close alertness to the nuances of cultivation, and who are determined to make for themselves a style of life in which there will be some built-in mode of validation, a validation not apart from but emerging out of their social pleasures. I put this, unavoidably, in abstract terms, but it is a decidedly interesting matter and O'Hara has a good deal to say and show about it.

The literary purposes to which he puts this knowledge are, however, severely constricted, and just how constricted will be clear to anyone who compares his work to the better fiction of Edith Wharton. She too was a portraitist of the social surface, she too had close involvements with the class she described, but because of her personal culture and temperament she brought to bear upon her material an enlarging standard of humane values and civilized reflection. It is precisely such a standard that one looks for and seldom finds in O'Hara, some sense of that critical detachment from his world which keeps the writer from being merely identified with it.

In O'Hara's new stories there are some new faults, both touching and amusing. He has become pedantic, inserting passages into his stories which boastfully set other writers straight about those points of information that seem to him a key to truth. He has also become interested in wisdom, and there are sudden flat sentences of comment and psychology embarrasing for what they say though moving when one considers his need to say them. His prose is no longer as terse as it once was, suffering at times from *New Yorker* spread. And when he writes in the first person, through his literary shadow Malloy, he affects a tone of gentlemanly *savoir faire*, as if he were Captain Marlow returning from the heart of American darkness. All the while, however, one detects in him a great earnestness: I entirely believe the statement in his preface that his feeling about writing is "practically religious." It is as if he were hoping to find a way to break through that surface perception to which he seems doomed, a way of grasping that imaginative largesse he so much admires in Scott Fitzgerald.

Still, four good stories. "The Weakness," written in his earlier style of harsh economy, shows a prize-fighter reaching the end of his career, getting

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himself into trouble with a woman and returning bleary and pugnacious to his wife. "The High Point" is a chilling notation on ugliness in marriage, "It's Mental Work" on ugliness in small business. Best of all is "The Old Folks," a quiet account of two middle-aged people who are fond of each other and nervously go off on a weekend to see whether they can build a marriage for their late years. This beautiful piece of work leads one to speculate on the writer O'Hara might have been if he had not stiffened into the limitations on which his reputation so securely rests.

The First Free Men and Institutions

by Asher Brynes

A free society, as the Victorians understood freedom, needed characters like Sherlock Holmes to do what a government of limited powers and ingrown habits could not do for itself. In such a society officialdom, symbolized by the bumbling Lestrade, could deal only with the obvious because it was incapable of taking thought. A bureaucrat was a man trying to behave like a collective.

Freedom in the Ancient World
by Herbert J. Muller
(Harper; $7.50)

Since then we have had a transformation. Interest in frontier problems of liberty and law is as wide as ever, but the individualists who once operated on that social borderline have been crowded out – the collective has begun trying to behave like a man. Now when the sirens wail on radio and TV, and this happens every night, civil service policemen of high intelligence as well as tested courage, in uniform or plainclothes, jump out of screeching automobiles wherever injustice has been done. They proceed to avenge the dead or capture lesser criminals alive. They also comfort the bereaved, feed the hungry, and find jobs for the unemployed. There is nothing left for a private operative like Holmes to do today except (and this is cold comfort for the few of his descendants who still practice the trade) to suffer beatings more brutal than 20th Century American audiences feel it is proper to impose on the noblemen who work for police departments.

In other key professions the individualist has been demoted. Garret inventors have been replaced by teams of researchers housed in corporate structures: universities, government, industry. Inner-directed businessmen are far less conspicuous today than the "personalities" who front for syndicates of investors; the odd-ball in politics today has as much chance of surviving as a snowball in the Sahara.

But not in yesterday's world, as Professor Muller describes it. He puts the ancient Greeks in the center of his narrative because they were "the first people to realize the revolutionary social possibilities of . . . cheap tools. Their rise in the world was marked by the rise of many small, independent farmers, merchants, and artisans." He goes on to say that as individual initiative and enterprise came to be as much esteemed as noble birth, these persons were able to break the tradition of servitude – the "fetters of priests and kings" – and develop free institutions.

That is the key with which Muller unlocks the riddle of freedom in its widest sense, liberty under law: when it began, how it was maintained, how it died, and inferentially – for he announces that this is a history for use and not a mere "reconstruction" of the past – how it is to be restored where it has perished, or implanted where it never was. The writing is clear and specific. "The growing spirit of individualism was dated by one Aristonothos, who about 700 BC signed his name on a vase he made – the oldest known such work in existence. Upon the invention of coinage, the Greeks not only hit on the idea of small change but made more use of money than other people did to reduce serfdom and forced labor. For the first time in history common men now had a real chance to build up an individual surplus and solidly improve their economic and social status . . . the Greeks [also] seized on the idea of contract . . . and rational agreement began to displace fixed status and unreasoned tradition as the basis of their most characteristic political tradition . . . [the] 'city-state'."

In contrast, not a single one of the higher religions of ancient times, says Muller, fostered the growth of a free society. The Buddhists devoted themselves to "peace of mind." The essence of the older religion of Hinduism in India "was a substantial agreement on the unimportance if not the unreality of the temporal world, and the supreme importance of nonattachment to it." Confucianists subordinated the individual to such a degree that there is not even a word for *rights* in classical Chinese; they succeeded in achieving a society so stable that it could not be free. As for ancient Judaism, "Israel flatly denied a universal experience by claiming a unique divine revelation." It was a tribal or perhaps a national religion book in those days.

The one solid tradition of freedom in ancient times was the *polis* of the Greeks. What became of it? This is quite a story and the part that might concern us most is not told in this volume, though Professor Muller does have a chapter on Byzantium, the state that survived more than a thousand years of conflict and cold war. According to Bury, who is one of the primary authorities, the *deme* organization of the later Greek empire "represents a survival of the old Greek *polis*." Under the stress of crisis it was emptied of its content of freedom and in the Dark Ages became an instrument of regulation and servitude. The landlords became fighting men, outfitted expensively in armor of chain mail; and the farmers became serfs attached to the soil in order to support these local champions of survival who, in turn, gradually came to hold their estates not as a matter of right but at the pleasure of the central government.

Mr. Muller could have drawn the moral. That is what a long-continued crisis might do to our free institutions. Our noble and all-wise cops could discipline us with our consent to the acceptance (if the tension lasts long enough) of an effective despotism in place of the mere sentiment of democracy. It happened before. It happened to those wonderful Greeks.

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MOVIES

Macbeth in Japan, Stale Smoke in Dixie

We keep reading about the activity of Akira Kurosawa, the director of *Rashomon* and *Ikiru* who is one of the finest film artists alive, and keep hoping to see more of his work. But with him, as with many foreign directors, it is as if each of his films were put in a rudderless boat, shoved out from home, and left to the winds of commercial chance

Throne of Blood (Brandon)
Summer and Smoke (Paramount)

to bring it to us. So far, three other films besides the above have reached us: *Drunken Angel, The Seven Samurai,* and *The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail.* At last a 1957 film of his has arrived – *Throne of Blood,* his adaptation of *Macbeth* laid in 16th Century Japan.

It is wretched, now, to have to qualify our gratitude. But *Throne of Blood* underscores a fairly obvious difference between Kurosawa and us: he is Japanese. There is much cheery talk about the international language of art, but film-goers know that there are qualities in films from radically different cultures that will not translate. They are not verbal matters, they are what might be called mother's-milk matters; you have to grow up on them – attitudes, conventions, special tastes.

(A small personal illustration: at a party I was talking to a distinguished Asian director who kept looking idly out the window. I thought I was boring him and soon withdrew. Later my host said, "Please go across and talk to X. He says he was enjoying his conversation with you." Subsequently I saw a film by X in which the hero received some wonderful news with a grunt and a look out the window; and I realized that neither subtitling nor dubbing can bridge all gaps.)

The chief drawback of this film for us is that it reflects *Macbeth* in an exotically distorting mirror. Many in Kurosawa's Japanese audience know the original play, of course, but most of the styles and attitudes of the film are mother's-milk matters to them and presumably affect them as Anouilh's *Antigone* affects us: as a pertinent new restatement of an old story. But, to pursue the parallel, this film to us is something like what Anouilh's play might have been to ancient Athenians. It tells us considerable about the people who made it, but the more it does that, the more it distracts us and emphasizes its remoteness.

"Macbeth" is played by Toshiro Mifune (the bandit of *Rashomon*) with a tigerish vigor that is often impressive but does not convey what we expect of the part – a large man progressively shrivelled by listening to voices that convert his ambitions into his ethos. "Lady Macbeth" with her eyebrows painted out and two black smudges high on her forehead, who kneels on a mat and bedevils her husband obliquely with cast-down eyes, can do nothing for us but further widen a schism.

Even in Japan there were some qualities that went unappreciated. According to the invaluable book by Anderson and Richie, *The Japanese Film,* the Noh elements in the witch scenes and elsewhere meant little except to Noh specialists.

Kurosawa is known there as the "least Japanese" of directors and that may be the paradoxical reason why so many of his films are affecting to us. Any Kurosawa film is welcome, including the other adaptations he has made, but we have to hope that they will be more accessible.

Meanwhile, his *Throne of Blood* provides an abstract display of some of his talents, with a few individually powerful scenes like the murder of the murderer of "Banquo." Every moment of the film is seen with an exquisite eye, yet Kurosawa avoids the peculiarly Japanese snare of filming beautiful portraits and landscapes – he makes moving pictures. His pearl-gray, windswept medieval Japan is chilly and eerie, and his fortresses of thick wood look stronger than steel. He uses his sound track evocatively: the horses' hoofs, the creak of armor, the padding of soldiers' feet. But the film's inherent contradiction is that it continually reminds us of *Macbeth* and thus of its wide difference from it; it becomes a moderately interesting curiosity rather than an emotional experience.

Thirteen years ago Tennessee Williams' *Summer and Smoke* seemed a modestly poetic dramatization of the non-startling thesis that Sex Is Not Necessarily Ugly. The years have dealt unkindly with the play, and now it has been dealt its most unkindest cut of all by being filmed in a pedestrian fashion that destroys its modest poetry. A few allusive scenes in the park have been retained, but they only underscore the naturalism of the rest.

Geraldine Page, who played it touchingly off-Broadway, is the repressed Alma Winemiller, but the strangled little flutters of libido that gave pathos to her first portrayal have largely degenerated into facial mannerisms. I suspect that this gifted actress was uncomfortable because she knows she is now too old to play this part in a film. As for Laurence Harvey, the neighboring doctor-satyr, his soul has evidently

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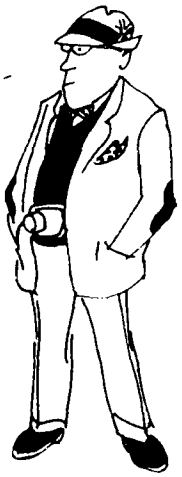
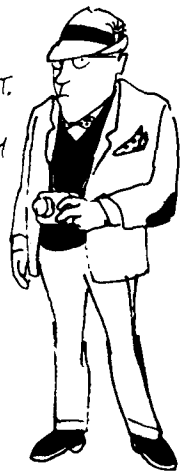
JULES FEIFFER

BEFORE WE LEFT THE CONTINENT ELLA AND ME DECIDED WED GO DOWN TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY- YOU KNOW- TO PROTEST ALL THESE **BOMB** TESTS.

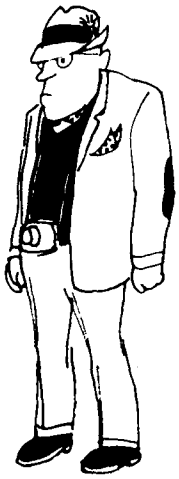


SO AFTER WAITING AROUND FOR AWHILE WE GOT TO SEE A SOVIET OFFICIAL AND WE MADE OUR PROTEST. HE JUST SMILED LIKE I WAS SOME KIND OF **KID** AND SAID I OBVIOUSLY MISUNDERSTOOD **HISTORY** - WAS I UNAWARE THAT THE U.S. USED THE BOMB **FIRST**?

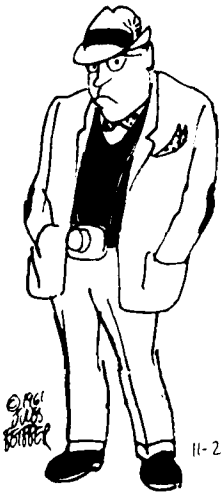


I SAID O.K., BUT I DIDN'T THINK THAT EXCUSED THIS FIFTY MEGATON BUSINESS. BUT THIS SOVIET OFFICIAL JUST SMILED AND SAID I OBVIOUSLY MISUNDERSTOOD **HISTORY** - WAS I UNAWARE THAT U.S. TROOPS INVADED RUSSIA IN 1918?

WELL, I SAID **NOBODYS** PERFECT BUT I DIDN'T SEE WHAT THAT HAD TO DO WITH-. BUT THE SOVIET OFFICIAL SMILED AND SAID I OBVIOUSLY MISUNDERSTOOD **HISTORY** - WAS I UNAWARE OF AMERICAN MINING INTERESTS IN **KATANGA**, LOW PAY FOR **TEACHERS** AND LYNCHINGS IN THE **SOUTH**?



WE GOT OUT OF THERE SMILING AND SHAKING HANDS AND TOASTING WORLD PEACE -



I HAVE A FEELING THAT ONE OR BOTH OF US IS CRAZY.

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11-26

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transmigrated back to England and left his corpse in Hollywood.

Peter Glenville, the English director who demonstrated convincingly with Danny Kaye's *Me and the Colonel* that he has no comic touch, now goes on to prove that he has no poetic or dramatic touch, either. Where there is a cliché buried, depend on Glenville to unearth it: for instance, the way you can be *sure* that an actor will turn for a last word just before he exits. Glenville's ideas of sex appeal are odd, too. The dance with which Rita Moreno lures Harvey is pure Keystone comedy. We almost expect the camera to cut away from poor Miss Moreno's torpid wiggle – not to Harvey – to the joyous face of Ben Turpin.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

ART

Ben Shahn on Fallout

Of all the ingenious verbalizings put out to explain *Schmeerkunst*, the one I like best is the one that links it to the world situation from about 1945 to the present, as if it were compounded of the remembrance of Hiroshima, the anticipation of Armageddon and the resulting intuition that life is not worth living. While you and I, slaves of a pettifogging logic, might follow such an intuition with a leap from the top of the Sixes to the doorstep of the Museum of Modern Art, the *Schmeerkunstler*, unburdened by logic, takes a more pedestrian path to the same destination, sets up as an official Young American and does a brisk business in Despair and in Paintings Proving that Painting is Past.

Well, it's a living and who are we to cavil at the way any man elects to earn his bread?

The only problem with the ploy is that sooner or later some real painter was bound to come along and demonstrate that those aspects of the recent past and threatened future which allegedly impose a kind of gibbering can also be the material for intelligible passion. Really, this should surprise no one. For centuries, after all, painters regarded the inevitability of the end of the world and the last judgment in somewhat the same horror-stricken way many now regard the possibility of the nuclear Big Casino. Yet hundreds of them managed to paint that nightmare, not at all as a bogey to frighten children, but as a dread certainty toward which mankind moved as steadily as the shadow of night moving across the earth. The artistic act of the human spirit in steadfastly contemplating that ultimate disaster and making the contemplation visible for others was in a sense the human mastery of the disaster. This is one of the functions of all the arts. There is no theoretical reason why the process shouldn't be applied to our present situation, and now it has been.

There is an added irony to the triumph of artistic intelligence over the fell clutch of nuclear circumstance, because the artist is Ben Shahn, an American painter who, in the view of the *Schmeerkunstlers*, was supposed to have dropped dead years ago, condemned as being interested in social justice, something no true artist should be allowed to bother his Young American head about.

Shahn's achievement is a series of 10 paintings and 15 drawings exhibited this fall at the Downtown Gallery under the title of "The Saga of the Lucky Dragon." Far from shunning the "literary," Shahn employs actual letters to spell out his theme. The first and the largest of the paintings, a full seven feet high, is a stark portrait of a Japanese man sitting on a hospital bed with a placard: "I am a fisherman, Aikichi Kuboyana by name. On the first of March, 1954, our fishing boat, the Lucky Dragon, wandered under an atomic cloud 80 miles from Bikini. I and my friends were burned. We did not know what happened to us. On September 23rd of that year I died of atomic burn."

Thus the theme is bluntly stated. It is developed through the series in terms of pure paint and pure image, but in that first painting, the letters themselves are far from being an extraneous "literary" element. Although in English, they are based on earlier uses by Shahn of letters from the Hebrew alphabet. Taken together here they are black tongues of fire, a leaping, living illumination of the passive fisherman awaiting his death.

The same qualities appear in the chief visual symbol devised by the artist, a figure, strongly linear, of a fire-dragon, combining the name of the unhappy ship, the spread of fear and fallout, and a beast of Shahn's dating back at least thirteen years and referred to throughout his brilliant Harvard lectures, "The Shape of Content."

The fire-dragon appears and reappears, changing his size and shape like a malignant amoeba. Japanese parents and children are somberly posed with the fire-dragon hovering on the horizon. "The Physicist" appears against a vividly colored checkerboard background suggesting a table of the elements. Masked, he holds up an X-ray plate and on it is the image of the fire-dragon. In one great drawing, the beast squirms inside a man's head. Elsewhere it contrasts with the similar movement of a flight of white birds gazed at by children. Finally, in a spreading horizontal painting, "We Did Not Know What Happened to Us," the fire-dragon is everywhere. The large painting is black and in the blackness are seen the

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faces and clutching hands of men sinking beneath the waves. The waves themselves are delineated by the lines of the dragon, drawn in many colors against the black, spreading out to fill the world. It is as if the lights of the stars, reflected in the waters, have become the fire-dragon of our dreams.

Done mostly in tempera or gouache, the painting itself has a dry, scraped quality, familiar in much of Shahn's past work, but now ominously recalling a future memory of our own skin and the skin of the world at some possible point in our universal voyage of the Lucky Dragon. FRANK GETLEIN

THEATER

All Hail, Mahomet of Middle Seriousness

If Paddy Chayefsky had never existed, Broadway would surely have invented him. No playwright has ever been so perfectly made in the image of his audience or reflected more accurately its changing aspirations and pretensions. For while most other commercial dramatists are still engineering their wares for moribund types like the

Gideon
by Paddy Chayefsky
(Plymouth Theater)

chittering Helen Hokinson lady and the Cleveland Rotarian, Chayefsky knows exactly who is in the theater party out front, and writes for them as if he were privy to their inmost desires. (Even his recent conversion from a soap opera naturalist to a mystical fantasist shows his responsive awareness of the new spectator's more sophisticated demands.) It would not surprise me if Chayefsky, before writing *Gideon*, had made a sociological depth study of upward cultural mobility among the newly rich, the growing religiosity in the suburbs, and just how much rebellion an audience is willing to tolerate before running for the exits. In his new play, he has managed to unify all three columns of the questionnaire (*Yes*, *No*, and *Undecided*) by combining secular sentiments with religious pieties, vaudeville effects with Herman Wouk metaphysics, and the titillation of revolt with the security of comformity. Cannily measuring just how much intellectual gas will fill the commercial tank, he has even bothered to raise some questions about theology, humanism, the Copernican universe, and the relationship of man to God – before gingerly dropping the whole mess into the yawning cavern of Love. Can he do this, and cannot win a crown? Tut, were Broadway titles further off, he would pluck them down, for he now leads all rivals as the Koheleth of Kitsch, the Benefactor of the Benefit Crowd, the Mahomet of Middle Seriousness.

His secret is this: he simply selects a work of some literary distinction, squeezes it dry of all significance, power, and depth, and adapts it to the more conventional expectations of his audience – calling in Tyrone Guthrie to contribute false climaxes, burlesque routines, and sensational effects (belly dances from the Egyptian Gardens, Jewish rituals from the Fifth Avenue Synagogue, execution scenes from his old production of *Tamburlaine*) when his own imagination flags. In *The Tenth Man*, we saw Ansky's *Dybbuk* through the smiling tears of Molly Goldberg; in *Gideon*, a far more tedious work, we get a look at the Book of Judges as Andre Obey might have seen it, had he worn the minifying bifocals of Archibald MacLeish. For Chayefsky's Gideon – based on the great Israelite hero who, inspired by an Angel of the Lord, annihilated the Midianite host with a tiny force – has been reduced, like MacLeish's Job, to a lumpish mediocrity, capable neither of heroic deeds nor heroic suffering. In the pudgy, sluggish, ingratiatingly muddle-headed performance of Douglas Campbell, he looks like Marty in a cuirass and buckler – at his worst moments, the village idiot; at his best, a Jewish Falstaff as cowardly as any subaltern in his pusillanimous army (he spends the entire battle hiding out

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from the enemy). Even in his moments of command, he is merely a dummy manipulated by a celestial ventriloquist, following the Lord's directions with baffled incomprehension.

In French myth-drama, the reduction of a heroic character to a commonplace non-entity is an ironic device to satirize the inadequacies of the spectator; in American plays of this type, the technique is employed to flatter the spectator's democratic averageness. But Chayefsky's eagerness to cajole his auditors leads him even to patronize God. As played by Fredric March, wrapped in a burnoose, his speech muffled by a ton of stylized hair, the Angel of the Lord is egotistical, vain, smug, envious, absent-minded, intellectually confused, and sentimental – in short, He has been thoroughly secularized for easy laughs. Even the "jealousy" of the Old Testament deity has been given its familiar suburban equivalent. In Chayefsky's harrowing imagery, the relationship between Gideon and the Lord is that of man and wife – and the Lord is the female partner! Having won Gideon's love by feats of magic, He must hold it with constant vigilance; and when Gideon later rejects His advances ("I don't feel affectionate at the moment"), the Lord feels banished to the tent "like your other wives." God is characterized, in short, as a possessive woman, responsible for her husband's career and continually demanding credit for his success, who is jealous of all his adventures beyond the "home."

This incredible marital situation provides the soupy climax of the play. When Gideon, anxious to elevate himself, begins to explain his victory in rationalistic terms, the Angel equates this with the belief that the sun revolves around the earth; and when he disobeys the Lord's command to kill the Elders of Succoth, the Angel finds him guilty of marital infidelity. But Gideon is ready to declare a "divorce between us." He has discovered that he cannot love the Lord ("You're too vast a concept"), he can only fear Him; and His very existence robs Gideon's life of meaning. The kind of meaning he aspires to is suggested when Gideon, pleading for "at least some bogus value," hungrily eyes the golden ephod he has made for the Lord. As the Angel prepares to strike him down for this blasphemy, Gideon, putting on the garment, begs, "If you love me, God," while the Angel, weeping like a self-sacrificing wife, cries, "I – love – you – Gideon" – and lets him wear it. Following this Second Avenue theater epiphany, the Lord begins to disappear from the earth altogether, as Gideon – strutting in his rich raiment – exits, discussing the "socio-economic, historico-cultural-psychological" basis for his victory.

It should be perfectly obvious that Chayefsky, like his character in *The Tenth Man*, "doesn't believe in God. He simply wants to love." And in his outrageous tendency to swallow up both belief and unbelief in a molasses mixture of false sentiment, one can find plenty of precedents (*J.B.* is one) in Broadway plays. I have had my say about Broadway Love (Emerson said it better: "The doctrine of hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pules and whines"). Let us talk about Broadway Rebellion. In one fell swoop, Chayefsky has neatly reduced the whole tradition of revolt since the Renaissance to an American bourgeois vision of worldly ambition and material gain, thus robbing it of all its spiritual, moral, and intellectual values. I have not the patience to compare Chayefsky's Gideon with the great rebels against God like Goethe's Faust, Ibsen's Emperor Julian, Brand, and Solness, Shaw's Don Juan, and Strindberg's Stranger; suffice it to say that, by providing his "rebel" hero with the soul of an American businessman, Chayefsky has once more struck a courageous stance right in the center of conformity. *Gideon* is a long-winded play, in which even Chayefsky's substantial comic inventiveness seems to have

"THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT *has announced a change in the immigration laws, the effect of which will be to bar all immigrants from Commonwealth nations who fail to show 1) that a job awaits them in Britain, or 2) that they possess useful skills, or 3) that they are educated. Well, if the migrants can't get into England, they can always try Newburgh — eh, Rocky?*"

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failed him; but its success was foreordained before the author wrote his opening scene. I have a vision of Chayefsky greedily turning his eyes on that golden ephod which lies down the glittering alley of Times Square, while casting trembling glances towards the dead god who once demanded some fidelity to Truth. . . .

ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Correspondence

Heredity and Mental Ability

Sirs:

Gerald W. Johnson's remarks about mental ability (October 2) threw me into a state of mild shock.

I have studied and read as much material as I could find on this question. As far as I am able to determine, aside from the occasional case of congenital deficiency, we are all born with equal brain power, just as we are all born with equal ability of our muscles or our livers to function. Indeed, the liver has about ten times the functional capacity that the body requires. Many other organs have similar over-capacities. I do not doubt that the brain has been constructed along the same principle. The brain is the only organ protected by a double wall of bone. Therefore, it may have a greater functional over-capacity than any other organ.

I suggest that aside from the rare case of congenital deficiency in muscles, liver or brain, we all have equal capacities and the difference depends on training only. Willy Patterson could easily flatten me in less than a second but his muscles do not hold a book more efficiently than mine do. They have, of course, been trained to perform more difficult feats.

For some further proof: the dreams of people of classes generally considered to be in the lowest levels of intelligence show an ability to symbolize and dramatize in such a masterful way that if they could reproduce when awake, Shakespeare himself might well pale by comparison.

If the idea of inherited better brains is believed, why not better families in which these brains run? And so we can easily go back to feudalism or oligarchical rule. If I may say, I would be much happier to see the editors of *The New Republic* stand four square for the value and capacity of each individual.

Jay H. Schmidt, M.D.
Chicago, Illinois

Presidential Economics

Sirs:

Seymour Harris' October 30 rebuttal to my article of October 9 reiterates his lately acquired animadversion to rising public outlays for welfare, and again uses comparisons with the Eisenhower Administration in concluding that President Kennedy "can well be proud of what was achieved in 1961 and likely in 1962." I can see little cause for pride in the October figures on unemployment, showing that, even without Hurricane Carla, idleness is as high as nine months ago, reflecting the weakest upturn since World War II. Objective analysts are not exhuberant about the 1962 outlook.

Mr. Harris' argument ultimately boils down to his proposition that, under current conditions, independent economists *outside* the Government (his misreading of what I did when working for President Truman is irrelevant) should criticize *only* the Congress and *not at all* the Executive Branch. But if the President's program is inadequate (whether or not because of "political" difficulties), pointing out that it is inadequate is a *sine qua non* toward needed improvements both in the program and in the prospects for its "political" acceptability. And nobody can say this without calling it the President's program; there is no other program to identify. Insofar as Harris would have nobody challenge the Administration's actions until more progress can be made in moving Senator Harry Byrd up the road toward Keynesian economics, I would fear to wait that long. Thus, the Harris thesis, founded in his own concept of political strategy, seems to me dangerously self-defeating. It misreads the nature of the Presidency; it does a disservice to the President; and it ignores the whole mechanics of popular education, political accountability, and needed pressures upon the Executive Branch no less than upon the Congress.

Leon H. Keyserling
Washington, D. C.

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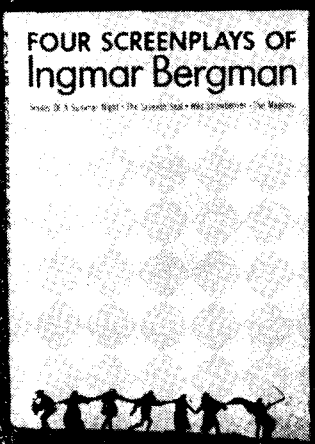

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